

**I recently submitted the following to the Congressional Record on the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act”.**

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 4347, “The Department of Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act.” This legislation gets us much closer to fulfilling our special nation-to-nation relationship with Native American people and tribes in our country. HR 4347 includes critical amendments to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act that essentially allow for greater self-governance by Indian tribes; it directs the Secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Health and Human Services to implement criteria that makes it possible for more tribes to learn about and eventually enter into self-governance compacts or agreements to administer whole programs currently performed by the Federal government. In addition to enhancing their sovereignty, this legislation has the potential to significantly improve the effectiveness of social, education, and health programs because leaders within specific Indian Tribes are often in the best position to determine the needs of their communities. Additionally, as suggested by a 2004 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Indian tribes that participated in self-governance agreements often experienced greater growth in employment levels from 1990 to 2000 compared to those that had either lower or no participation in these programs.

I have been an ardent supporter of tribal sovereignty throughout my career as an elected official, and advocated to ensure that the federal government is accountable for exercising its full fiduciary responsibility. During my early career as an educator, I traveled through Indian Country doing educational research for Stanford University. Over the past fifteen years serving in the California State Assembly and U.S. Congress, I have authored legislation and voted to support measures that respect and protect tribal sovereignty.

## **Extension of Remarks on H.R. 4347, “The Department of the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act.”**

Written by Mike Honda

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As a member of the Congressional Native American Caucus since coming to Congress in 2001, I have been a strong supporter of full respect and recognition of tribal jurisdictions, for the expansion of tribal courts, the protection of Indian water and fishing rights, increased funding for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and key programs serving Indian Country. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have fought to increase funding for vital self-governance programs and funding for programs serving Indian Country.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I am proud that the House of Representatives has taken a significant step in the right direction!